# The Shakespeare Newsletter

VOL. III No. 2 *"Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me . . ."* APRIL, 1953

***The Merchant of Venice***
**at N. Y. City Center**

As is usual in NYC with Shakespeare, the Albert Marre production of *The Merchant of Venice* (March 4) at the City Center starring Luther Adler, received a wide variety of criticism. To contrast John Chapman's (*The News*) "choppily assembled, uncertainly staged, and infrequently illuminating," we have Robert Coleman's (*The Mirror*) opinion that the play was an "intelligent, effective production"—the best since Margaret Webster startled us with her magic touch.

Luther Adler received almost general acclaim for his interpretation with most of the discussion revolving around the anti-Semitic aspects. Walter Kerr of the *Tribune* found the robust Shylock better than the quavering octogenarian usually depicted but declared that the interpretation became more traditionally "lugubrious" after Jessica's desertion. With Brooks Atkinson of the *Times*, most critics believed that the star brought life into the play, but that the toning down of the part destroyed something. Atkinson accurately realizes that the animosity was religious rather than racial and that Shakespeare "humanized everything he touched," but William Hawkins of the *World-Telegram* may misunderstand the play when he says of Shylock that Shakespeare has "stacked every card in the deck against him." He declares that Adler gave more sympathy than Shakespeare did and that the reducing of the "fierce anti-Semitism . . . succeeds only in emasculating the play." John McClain of the *Journal-American* would also have liked to see a "full fiend," even consenting to forgetting the anti-semitism and calling the character "McClain." Similarly, Richard Watts, Jr., of the *Post* declares that discussion of persecution is merely academic and that Shakespeare made Shylock the one "flesh-and-blood" character in the play.

Portia (Margaret Phillips), Antonio (Philip Bourneuf), and the others were received with mixed criticism as were the folding-flap sets designed by Lemuel Ayers. Mr. Atkinson sagely commented that it was wrong to separate audience and actors by a wall and steps.

Had we been called in for consultation we would have objected to excessive dancing in the streets, elimination of the scene between Gobbo and his father, and cutting of the "Tell me where is fancy bred" song (which, with its advice and "ed" rhymes might have suggested the *lead* casket to the gold-seeking Bassanio). Inserting an entr'acte dance to give time to convert the stage to a courtroom is unnecessary and distracting as are the actors who strike outlandish poses while the principals are speaking. To give the rein to director, designer, and choreographer may produce an interesting play, but it does not always work for Shakespeare.

## 33 Week Season Begins at Stratford-on-Avon

With the birthday of Shakespeare still some weeks away, the 94th Season of plays opened its doors with *The Merchant of Venice* on March 17th. Michael Redgrave as Shylock and Peggy Ashcroft as Portia are starred in the production. Denis Carey, director of the Bristol Old Vic was called in to direct the play which was well received.

The 2nd play, *Richard III* starring Marius Goring and directed by Glen Byam Shaw opened on March 24. It has not been seen at Stratford for fourteen years.

*Antony & Cleopatra, The Taming of the Shrew*, and *King Lear* are also scheduled for this Coronation year in which the Memorial Theatre celebrates its 21st birthday.

## *Four Kentucky Colleges In Shakespeare Festival*

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Guignol Theatre at the University of Kentucky, four groups of Kentucky players delighted full houses from February 25 to March 3 in a memorable series of plays. The four groups were from Georgetown College, Morehead State College, Eastern State College, and the University of Kentucky.

Under the direction of Wallace N. Briggs, the University of Kentucky Guignol Players brought off three splendid performances of *King Lear* cut to two and half hours' playing time. Mrs. Lolo Robinson and her associates were responsible for the colorful and beautiful costumes. Lear was thoughtfully and convincingly portrayed, progressing from arrogance and unbelief in the division scene to rage and spiritual anarchy on the heath, and to sorrowful acceptance and resurrection at the end. The scene of Gloucester's blinding naturalistically played, was appropriately shocking, ably and evilly rendered.

The Georgetown College Maskrafters, directed by Rena Calhoun and Orlin R. Corey, presented a well-paced, fast-moving, and clearly characterized *As You Like It*. The way in which voice projection, stage business, and story had been directed showed the excellence of preparation from beginning to end; the two directors deserve the laurels as well as the players, for the production would have put many professional companies on their mettle. The players used the front stage in all except one scene, the only unsuccessful one in the whole merry play, and denoted changes of scene by way of placard.

The Morehead College Players under the direction of W. P. Covington, III, presented a nearly full length, slower-paced *Merry Wives of Windsor* which made more use of the set than the other plays did. The farcical scenes were handled in uproarious fashion, contrasting with the slower movements of other scenes.

The final play of the festival, *Twelfth Night*, was given by the Players of Eastern State College, directed by Keith Brooks, with choreography by Charlotte McGuire. The Director's version was experimental, employing dancers between the scenes to interpret the action and using colored lighting to enhance the moods. It was an interesting experiment, although slow to reach proper momentum.

The same two-level composite set was used by all four groups with varying degrees of success. The Georgetown players actually needed no set, and the weaknesses of the Morehead and Eastern players are accountable in some measure to the fact that they had not rehearsed on the unfamiliar stage. The successes, however, were in truth remarkable; the deficiencies of those who were inexperienced will surely bear fruit in later ventures.

—Maurice A. Hatch, U. of Ky.

## OREGON FESTIVAL PLANS

Plans to accommodate 20,000 people at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival at Ashland, Oregon were announced by Angus Bowmer, Producer of the Festival. The season will run the complete month of August and feature *The Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice, Coriolanus*, and *I Henry IV*, The star system is not used at Ashland and applications for parts have already been received from twenty states.

## Macbeth at Hofstra Festival

An Elizabethan production of *Macbeth* starring Ian Keith in the title role will be one of the main features at the 4th Annual Hofstra College Shakespeare Festival from April 23 to 26. Mr. Keith has acted in *King Lear, Hamlet*, and *Othello*, and was Bolingbroke in Maurice Evans' *Richard II*. Bernard Beckerman will direct the play. Tickets may be secured by writing to the College at Hempstead, N. Y.

The annual Symposium at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, April 26th will feature Prof. Edward Hubler of Princeton, Prof. Henry T. Myers of Cornell, and Walter Kerr, dramatic critic of the *Herald Tribune* in a panel discussion on "*Macbeth* as Poem and Play." President of the College John Cranford Adams who designed the stage will preside. Admission to Symposium and Exhibit is free.

## *Antioch's 2nd Annual Festival*

Directors Arthur Lithgow and Meredith Dallas were in NYC late in March auditioning actors for their Greco-Roman repertory of eight plays to be staged this summer at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. As in the 1952 season, new plays will be introduced into the repertory in the early weeks. In the two final weeks of the season (Aug. 25 to Sept. 6) two *Grand Repertoires* will unfold the complete cycle in successive weeks. During this same two-week period a continuous symposium on the Greco-Roman plays will be conducted each afternoon. Popular discussions by noted Shakespeareans will be featured.

## *KING LEAR* & Symposium in Miami

The third annual Shakespeare Festival at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida (April 13-25) will feature an arena production of *King Lear*, and symposia on Arena Staging and Shakespeare. In addition to those mentioned in the last issue, Irving Ribner, J. Max Patrick and George Freedley will also speak.

## *The Winter's Tale* at Beaver College

A three-day Centennial Fine Arts Festival at Beaver College in Jenkintown, Pa., featured a production of *The Winter's Tale* directed by Prof. Judith Elder, (March 12-13). Novel effects were achieved by combining arena and proscenium staging. Action was compressed to an hour and a half and setting and costume keyed to convey dramatic mood rather than a literal sense of period. Profs. Benton Spruance and Jean Francksen, and Miss Elsie McGarvey designed the sets and costumes for the production.

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## *"A Thing of Beauty . . ."*

Without becoming too much involved in esthetic theory we might say that a work of art is great in proportion to the number of people it excites for the longest period of time. Is it possible to develop an art of Shakespearean acting and production which can be forever expressive? Must each age have its *own* interpretation? Or is each generation trying to *achieve* the "ideal" which will be eternally proper?

What we are driving at is the possibility of taking all available prompt books and traditions, editing out that which is eternal, and, after doing the same with staging techniques, evolving a production that is not of an age but for all time. To tabulate the available acting and production techniques would be simpler than to decide what is eternally suitable, but at least a start ought to be made in that direction.

Personally, we would like to believe that each member of a Shakespeare company is trying to achieve the *ideal*, but from productions we have seen recently, and the billing given to the author, it seems that the *ego* of the principals is more important than consideration of the text. Shakespeare is too great a part of our culture to be solely dependent on a company to bring him to life. It is high time we started to stabilize our traditions rather than to be always creating new distracting devices under the pretext of revitalizing Shakespeare.

Meanwhile, unknown to one another, three young groups of actors have organized themselves in NYC to devote themselves to the interpretation of Shakespeare. We have asked each group to submit 500 words on 1) The problem, 2) Proposed solution, 3) The method of attaining it, and 4) The stage on which it should be done. These, along with any other comments readers might care to send, will be published in May.

## *"To the great Variety of Readers"*

At the beginning of our third year it would be an unkindness not to usurp two inches of our cramped space to thank those who have subscribed, renewed, sent in hundreds of generous comments, helped in many ways in the past, and have volunteered to help in the future. In this labor of love, it is the generous praise and appreciation of our efforts as much as the necessary subscriptions that enables us to continue. To our readers in almost 300 colleges and universities, in about 200 libraries, in a dozen foreign countries, in private homes, in classrooms, and in many Shakespeare Clubs, we send our sincere thanks. With your continued support we shall try to live up to our own hopes and your expectations.

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## Shakespeare in Germany

Last year, the German Shakespeare Society gave further evidence of its vitality by arranging a special autumn festival in the Ruhr city of Duisburg, from the 23rd to 26th of October. At the ceremonial opening of the festival in the Duisburg city theatre on the 23rd, the Vice President of the Society, Professor Hermann Heuer of the University of Freiburg, gave a lecture on "Shakespeare's Problem Comedies." This formed an appropriate introduction to the subsequent performance of *Troilus and Cressida* by the actors of the Essen Municipal Theatre. On the 24th, Prof. Otto zur Nedden of Duisburg spoke on "Shakespeare and the Occidental Theatre," and in the evening the festival continued with the Wuppertal Municipal Theatre's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Purcell's music. The following day brought a lecture on "The Personality of Shakespeare in his Works" by Mr. Walter Josten of Bonn, whose new translation of *All's Well That Ends Well* was staged by the players of the Cologne Municipal Theatre later on the same day. The festival reached its climax on Sunday, October 26th, with the reading of a paper on "Shakespeare: Drama and Stage" by the recently deceased President of the German Shakespeare Society, Prof. Saladin Schmitt of Bochum, who conceived the Festival but did not live to see its fruition. The Festival was made a tribute in his honor. The accompanying musical program was provided by the Duisburg Symphony Orchestra. The festival concluded with a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* by the Bochum City Theatre, of which Saladin Schmitt was director at the time of his death.

*Karl Wentersdorf, Giessen, Germany*

## Shakespeare in An Unusual Setting

It will astonish many to know that Shakespeare's plays have been crowned with success when performed against the backdrop of the African equatorial bush. This is no idle boast. By permission of His Excellency the Governor of Tanganyika, *The Tempest* was played in the pleasantly tropical grounds of Government House and in four nights cleared £180. The producer was Alan Lyle-Smith, and the play came to us under the auspices of the British Council.

What of our audiences? Instead of nutcrackers and penny-patrons and fine dames and wits up from the Inns of Court, we have here Africans of diverse tribes, Arabs, Hindus and Moslems, Greeks, Malayans, and diehard Britons—all unified by the wonder of Shakespeare's poetry and the magic of Prospero's wand.

Up-country we have *King John, Richard II*, excerpts from *Twelfth Night* and other late comedies, and inevitably, *Hamlet*. It is hard for an Englishman remote from the white cliffs of Dover to listen to John of Gaunt's moving lines without that deep emotion which brings one so near to tears. I, myself, shall never see *Richard II* again.

Easily the most important production to date is Alan Lyle-Smith's *Hamlet*, with Innes Forde in the title-role, once again played in collaboration with the British Council. The long rains were on top of us this time, so we went into a local playhouse. It is a pity we do not identify ourselves with stillness which hears "Not a mouse stirring." Children, especially African, get excited, pick out the villain of the piece much too soon, warn the hero, tell him to be kind to the heroine, shout, gasp, and clap with thunderous din.

When Sir Lawrence Olivier's *Hamlet* came out here I was canoeing up the Ugalla River trapping crocodiles so that ladies in America might walk down Broadway with a light and easy grace.

*K. B. Danks, Tanganyika, East Africa*

### New Readers

If you are a member of The Shakespeare Association of America or of a Shakespeare Club, or if you have obtained a sample copy from a Library or elsewhere, you are invited to subscribe by using the subscription box.

## "The Trial of William Shaksper"

To consider the question: "Did William Shaksper [sic] of Stratford really write the Plays of Shakespeare?" a trial by jury was conducted by the Town and Gown Society of Rutherford, N. J., at Fairleigh Dickinson College on March 25th. Throughout the proceedings, a student of the college dressed to resemble the Droeshout engraving sat silently in the prisoner's dock.

Council for Shakespeare was Prof. Samuel F. Johnson of New York University, a Contributing Editor of THE SHAKESPEARE NEWSLETTER. The Council for the negative was Mr. Charlton Ogburn, attorney and co-author with his wife of *This Star of England*, a volume which cites over a thousand pages of evidence to substantiate the claim that Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, wrote the works and used the pseudonym *William Shake-speare*.

Dr. Johnson opened the proceedings with a half-hour speech on the documentary evidence which equates William Shakespeare of Stratford with the actor and the poet-dramatist; he concluded by discounting the reasons given for doubting the authorship and by demonstrating the illogicality and fancifulness of the methods used by those who have urged the claims of other candidates, with specific reference to Mr. and Mrs. Ogburn's book.

Mr. Ogburn next spoke for half an hour, stressing the importance of knowing the true identity of the author of the plays, outlining his reasons for denying Shaksper's ability to write them, and showing that the 17th Earl of Oxford had all the essential qualities required to have been the author; he concluded by pointing out the scantiness of the evidence connecting Shaksper with the plays and arguing that the little evidence there is was part of a deliberate scheme to keep Oxford anonymous.

After half an hour of questioning by members of the jury and the audience, the presiding judge, W. Adriance Kipp, Jr., President of the Bergen County Bar Association charged the jury who later returned a verdict of eight to four in favor of Shakespeare of Stratford's authorship. Among the jurors were two teachers, a fashion writer, doctor, pianist, columnist, engineer, editor, business executive, novelist, and book reviewer.

The *Romeo & Juliet* film being produced in Verona, Italy by J. Arthur Rank-Universalcine will star a newly discovered 18-year-old English Susan Shentall. Renato Castellani is directing the film.

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## *Shakespeare's Catholicism*

*John H. de Groot, Brooklyn College*

*Shakespeare and Catholicism** by Heinrich Mutschmann and Karl Wentersdorf is frankly a polemic with an aim to prove that there can be no reasonable doubt that Shakespeare was a Roman Catholic. It is fair, then, to ask how much is proved, and how firm the proof is.

As to the religion of Shakespeare's parents, the thesis of denominational Roman Catholicism is successfully established, for the proof is documentary and corroborative. The conclusion is strengthened by the excellent account of the religious situation in England from 1550 to 1640, revealing how steadfast the Catholic faith remained in spite of governmental restriction and counteracting a too common opinion that the conversion of England to Protestantism was sudden and complete.

But as to Shakespeare's own private faith there is less certainty. The conclusion of the authors is based largely on a deduction that a majority of Shakespeare's friends were Catholic and on the testimony of many classified passages from Shakespeare's writings which mention, allude to, or use figuratively the doctrines, practices, and ideals of Catholicism.

### Arguments Unconvincing

The argument from Shakespeare's friends is an interesting and extensive addition to the literature on the subject, but not convincing. All moral maxims to the contrary notwithstanding, one chooses few of his friends: he rather has them chosen for him by circumstance. And where he chooses, he may sometimes choose on the principle that opposites attract. A numerical tally is unsatisfactory, for one intimate friendship may nullify the implications of a hundred casual contacts. The summary dismissal of Marlowe from the list of Shakespeare's associates is arbitrary and unwarranted.

The argument from quoted passages is also inconclusive. There is a kind of logical nakedness about quotations classified according to verbal content apart from dramatic context. Such quotations prove knowledge but not faith. Some of these quotations may communicate an impression of sincerity, but it is not true that such sincerity is confined to passages with Catholic coloring. The sense of sincerity seems stronger in the "great" passages in which the thought is humanistic, skeptical, and emotionally fatalistic.

Detracting from the force of the reasoning in the book as a whole is a palpable between-the-lines anxiety on the part of the authors, as if they, in presenting necessarily fragile evidence, hope the fragility will not be too apparent to the reader. Conclusions are sometimes stated with a triumphant confidence which tends to substitute assertiveness for proof. In short, the temper of the book is not conspicuously objective, a reasonable doubt lingers in the mind of the reader, and another effort to prove Shakespeare a partisan fails of its purpose.

* N. Y., Sheed & Ward, 1952, pp. 462, $6.00.

Prof. de Groot, Th. M., Princeton Seminary and Ph.D., Columbia, is author of *The Shakespeares and the "Old Faith,"* now in its 2nd printing.

## *"An Evening With Will Shakespeare"*

A distinguished cast of actors including Basil Rathbone, Faye Emerson, Eva LeGallienne, Margaret Webster, and others began a six weeks' tour of the eastern seaboard on April 6th. After opening in Boston, the group will tour to other eastern cities including New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, and Washington. With introductory narration by Miss Webster and interpolated music, portions of *Twelfth Night, H V, Julius Caesar, The Taming of the Shrew, Macbeth,* and *H VIII* will be presented.

The production, coordinated by Mary Hunter, is designed to focus interest on, and raise funds for, the building of a permanent Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy that "will be a counterpart of Stratford-on-Avon." Lawrence Langner of Theatre Guild is sponsor of the project.

## *Shakespeare at Webster College*

The fourteenth Annual Roll Call and Pilgrimage to the statue of William Shakespeare in Tower Grove Park, St. Louis, Missouri, sponsored by Webster College, will take place on April 23rd. The celebration will again be presided over by Harry R. McClain who originated the historical event. This year the celebration will be part of the "Home-coming" celebration at Webster from April 23 to 26.

A large group of distinguished guests from universities, colleges, high schools, and societies is expected. Professional and community theatre actors will have special invitations. It is expected that many of the 500 or more graduates of Webster College who played in one or more of Shakespeare's plays in their undergraduate days will be present. A scene from *As You Like It,* the first Shakespearean play presented at the College thirty years ago, will be presented at the foot of the statue. Subsequent performances of the play will take place at the College from May 1 to May 3.

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## Works In Progress

### *THE COMPOSITION OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS*

In this volume forthcoming from Yale University Press Prof. Albert Feuillerat tries to show precisely what Shakespeare wrote among the plays attributed to him, by analyzing *Titus Andronicus, Henry VI, Richard II, Richard III,* and *Romeo and Juliet.* To this task he brought all the resources of scholarship at his disposal —the historian's knowledge of politics, events, ideas, and personalities; the literary critics' knowledge of how plays were performed and printed, and of the practical functions of manuscripts and copyists; and above all a textual analysis that sets up the characteristic standards of Shakespearean versification, images, conceits, and habits of writing. This is a prodigious amassing of evidence in an area where there has been much argumentation and learned opinion but very little method. From this meticulous textual analysis and a lifelong study of the period, Prof. Feuillerat explains many of the mysteries that have long puzzled scholars, to demolish well-established myths, and to show the poet at work, sometimes slovenly, patching, saving what he could of the material at hand, always with an eye to the acting and to the requirements of the theater. To write this book it was necessary to know how little the Elizabethans cared for originality, why plays had to be changed for certain occasions, and how they were produced. Prof. Feuillerat searched every line and every record, and his results bear witness to his vast industry and knowledge. A three-volume work had been planned but only this was completed at the time of his death.

### CAMBRIDGE *NEW SHAKESPEARE* SERIES

J. Dover Wilson's next volume will be *Richard III Romeo and Juliet, Pericles, Othello, King Lear,* and *Timon of Athens* should follow in that *tentative* order. Alice Walker's *Textual Problems of the First Folio* will soon be ready for distribution.

### *THE HOME BOOK OF SHAKESPEARE QUOTATIONS*

A letter from Burton Stevenson, compiler of this now out-of-print 2100-page quotation thesaurus informs us that the final pages of an abbreviated version are off to the publisher. The shorter volume will not be as complete as the larger which had 87,000 entries in the Index, but its 25,000 entries should make it extremely useful. Mr. Stevenson, now eighty years old and for a long time Librarian at the Public Library at Chillicothe, Ohio, worked twenty years on these volumes. The book will be published by Funk & Wagnalls, publisher of F. E. Halliday's *A Shakespeare Companion.*

### *Bartlett's CONCORDANCE*

American scholars and libraries will be extremely grateful to the recently established St. Martin's Press for republication of the indispensable *Complete Concordance to Shakespeare* by John Bartlett. Since 1937 when the volume was last published, some of the original plates were destroyed by the bombing of London. Photographic reconstruction has restored them and the volume is offered "perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers," as originally conceived. The Press is an affiliate of Macmillan & Co. Ltd., of London, and hopes to make more widely known and easily obtainable, books published by the parent organization. Shakespearean titles by Bradley, Palmer, Raleigh, and others are already available.

### *THE PHILOSOPHY OF SHAKESPEARE*

K. J. Spalding's book under this title will soon be published in the U. S. by the Philosophical Library. Its chapter titles will give some idea of its contents: The Mind of S; S and Nature; S and Man; Drama of S; Social Man; The Statesman; Individual Man; Man's Salvation; and The Last Question.

### *ELIZABETHAN STAGING*

C. Walter Hodges has completed *The Globe Restor'd* which attempts to reveal the kind of dramatic presentation Shakespeare's audience saw. . . . The lectures which Richard Southern delivered at Bristol University in 1951-2 on "The Open Stage and the Modern Theatre, in Research and Practice," have been published. Both volumes are available in England.

## STRATFORD IN CANADA TO Feature Modern *"All's Well"*

The mid-summer Shakespeare Festival at Stratford, Ontario, will have an *"All's Well That Ends Well* production in "stylized 'modern' dress . . . no 'jokes' with cigarettes and cocktails . . . just very elegant, rather Puritanian effects," said Tyrone Guthrie, Director of the Festival. In contrast with the companion production of *RIII* in decor of medieval elegance, *All's Well* will be "chic without date." Tanya Moiseiwitsch is designing costume, sets, and stage. Co-starring with Alec Guinness who will portray RIII and King of France will be Irene Worth (currently Portia in Old Vic's *Merchant*) as Lady Anne and Helena.

### *SHAKESPEAREANS CELEBRATE*

When a surprise birthday party was given by Hiram Sherman in honor of Whitford Kane at Sardi's on Jan. 31, an unusual number of Shakespeareans responded. Mr. Kane is known for having buried more Ophelias than any other actor. In 50 years he has portrayed the Gravedigger twenty-three times.

Mr. Sherman was Puck when a boy and later Casca with Orson Welles. Clarence Derwent, President of ANTA has acted in 33 of the Bard's plays, and Charles Webster in 25 of them. Herbert Kramer wore the watch presented to him by Queen Marie of Roumania for his Belgrade production of *Romeo and Juliet.* Walter Hampden, the Dean of American Shakespearean actors and President of The Players, was there as were Frances Evans, Alexander Scourby, and Neva Patterson who acted with Maurice Evans. Philip Bournoef has been Buckingham in many *Richard III's* and was recently seen as Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost.* Martin Wolfson was in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* some years ago, and Mildred Dunnock has taught Shakespeare and played Anne in *Richard III.* Richard Rolf toured with Margaret Webster's traveling Shakespeare company. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Heine and their daughter Georgette, represented the Shakespeare Club of New York of which Mr. Heine is a Vice-President.

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## *Shakespeare in London: 1953*

*By William White*

RICHARD II, Gielgud's first production in Hammersmith was notable for Paul Scofield's title-role performance and Gielgud's adaptation of the tragedy to the small stage. Scofield emphasized the lyric quality of Richard's great soliloquies, and his weak king was more sympathetic than Eric Porter's dashing, vigorous Bolingbroke. Except for the ramparts scene, which missed the illusion of height and distance, the simple stylized set, easily altered, gave pace and dignity.

The Old Vic's triumphant ROMEO AND JULIET was followed by *The Merchant of Venice* in 18th Century dress, made successful by Paul Rogers as Shylock and Irene Worth as Portia. Roger's cringing, greedy, vengeful Jew, intent on Antonio's (Douglas Campbell) ruin, was pitiable in defeat. Irene Worth's courtroom Portia was quite different from the Belmont siren. A set raised and lowered through the floor, as players walked on and off, moved the action quickly between locales.

Hugh Hunt's Old Vic production of JULIUS CAESAR contained several strong individual performances: Paul Rogers as Cassius, William Devlin as Brutus, Robin Bailey as Antony, and Douglas Campbell as both Caesar and Octavius. The handsome pillars of Rome and the tents kept the staging in easy and flowing lines; also the mob scenes added much to the movement. However, one was left not quite satisfied: each portrayal was so singular, the play did not coalesce and ended by being more interesting than convincing.

Donald Wolfit opened his four-month Shakespeare season in Hammersmith with a romp as Touchstone in AS YOU LIKE IT. With the emphasis thus on comedy, Rosalind Iden's heroine was less romantic than she might have been, although Orlando (played by Peter Rendell) was melancholy enough. Shifting three-sided screens and turning them inside out as the scene moved about Arden Forest was more distracting than helpful in the ambling play.

Wolfit's TWELFTH NIGHT, in staging and acting by the whole company, was an achievement. There was considerable glee as Sir Toby Belch (Ernest Hare), Maria (Ellen Pollock) and Sir Andrew Aguecheek (Joseph Chilton) accomplished upstart Malvolio's downfall. By using an enormous book set backstage, changing scenes was no more difficult than turning its leaves: a clever and efficient device to keep Viola (Rosalind Iden) and Sebastian (Desmond Tester) apart until the denouement.

KING LEAR, Donald Wolfit's mightiest acting creation, was powerful enough in the Hammersmith Festival to pull his fellow-actors to heights not reached in other plays. His rages were mountainous and his depressions utter despair, yet he never lost his audience in his highest or lowest moments. Rosalind Iden (Cordelia), Sir Lewis Casson (Gloucester), Ernest Hare (Kent), and Michael Blythe (Edgar) gave important support. But Lear himself was so overwhelming, one hardly noticed the modern staging, which was kept simple.

Wolfit as Shylock came off second in comparison with Paul Rogers at the Old Vic, and both will be compared with Michael Redgrave's opening at Stratford March 17. It was a let-down after Lear, and the enemy of the MERCHANT OF VENICE lacked dignity; also Rosalind Iden's Portia was more a flirt than a grand young lady. However, the economy of the production—a compromise with Elizabethan—made transitions smoother than Old Vic's: some scenes were played on the apron before a curtain, and the change from Venice to Belmont needed only a new backdrop behind the one fixed set.

(William White, SNL's London correspondent, is on leave from Wayne University (1951-1953) to study in the University of London, where he is completing a Ph.D. thesis on A. E. Housman.)

### DISCOGRAPHY

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER'S soon-to-be-released version of *Julius Caesar* has been made into an unusual 59 minute recording cut from the sound track of the film. Continuity is narrated by producer John Houseman. . . . The Old Vic production of *Macbeth* starring Alec Guinness and Pamela Brown is scheduled for early release by VICTOR. . . . THEATRE MASTERWORKS has recorded the All-star "Evening with Will Shakespeare" presenting scenes and songs from various plays. Margaret Webster serves as commentator on the four long-playing records.

# Shakespeare Festivals at Susquehanna University

*Arthur H. Wilson, Susquehanna University*

In 1949, a well known professional troupe of seven people came to Susquehanna University (Selinsgrove, Pa.) to perform *Macbeth*. The performance was so inadequate that the students were moved to put on their own production of *Macbeth* in the next year in order to provoke invidious comparison. Thus was born the Shakespearean Festival at Susquehanna, followed in 1951 by *The Taming of the Shrew* and in 1952 by *The Merchant of Venice*. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is scheduled for this spring, from April 20 to May 2. The Festival includes fourteen on-campus performances as well as several off-campus engagements. Besides college and general public, it draws more than two thousand students from twenty-five high schools within a radius of seventy-five miles, thus endearing itself to the public relations officer as a magnificent colonizing project.

Axel R. Kleinsorg, the director, studied under B. Iden Payne, former director of the Shakespearean Memorial Theatre, and has done summer directing at the King's Theatre Guild in Bucks County. He has also worked with the Templayers of Temple University and the University Players of the State University of Iowa.

### Suggestions for the Director

Mr. Kleinsorg lists the following suggestions as valuable for Shakespeare on the college stage. The traditional approach is best rather than the modernistic or the experimental, particularly in geographical areas where Shakespearean performances are unfamiliar. The student actors need no Shakespearean background, but the qualities of voice and personal presence are more important than in modern plays. All productions should be kept simple by adhering to a single basic set, easily alterable by lighting and a few stage properties. The plays should be given in uncut versions. Casting is a problem of finding the right play for the students available at the time, rather than the right students for the play.

### The Shakespearean Consultant

Special problems for the director may well arise because Shakespearean dramas are actually period plays. The scholar can aid the director in such matters as Elizabethan English, the customs of the times, and even the theatrical traditions that have been handed down from Shakespeare's days. As examples, there are many vocabulary difficulties like "owe" and "own," or passages of very pungent humor, where the scholar can bring some elucidation. There are even such minor matters of costume and custom as when to wear a hat. There are likewise the acting traditions that stem from Richard Burbage, Robert Armyn, Will Kemp, and others, to come down the centuries in increasing significance. The scholar will have in his mind a knowledge of the complete Shakespeare; whereas the director is more likely to be thoroughly familiar with only a few of the plays.

Since 1952, the Festival has been housed in the Little Theatre, valuable adjunct to a new classroom building. Built as three-fourths of an ellipse, the 200 seat auditorium has a ceiling of acoustical tiles. Even a stage whisper can be heard in the last row of seats. Thus actors can deliver their lines without any feeling of forcing them and with maximum empathy. Latest equipment for staging and for audience comfort complete the picture.

Interesting sidelights on the four festivals reveal that most of the student actors have never seen a Shakespearean production except at Susquehanna. Campus athletes compete to be in the cast. Singing pages were featured in the *Merchant*, and six-piece Elizabethan orchestra purposely descended into occasional humor between the acts of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

(Prof. Wilson has been professor of English at Susquehanna since 1931. His most important book is *A History of the Philadelphia Theatre*, 1835-1855.)

# PROSPERO'S RENUNCIATION

*Hardin Craig, University of Missouri*

Shakespeare rewards his faithful servants and seems to prefer his own simple meanings to those forced upon him. This remark is apropos of a performance of *The Tempest* by the Department of Theatre and Arts of Stephens College, which opened on March 18th under the direction of John Gunnell.

The Stephens Playhouse is well equipped both materially and in the matter of personnel. It has a considerable staff of professional actors and theatrical specialists and could, if it chose, have done something much more flashy and modernistic than it has. In the matter of female characters, Stephens being a woman's college, the performance is generous, since there are two admirable Mirandas and no less than three singing Ariels. Male actors were imported for the other roles. The acting is competent, the interrelations harmonious, and the tempo rapid. All of these circumstances contribute to the point I hope to make, namely, that the performance approximates, in essence at least, the communal quality that must have characterized an Elizabethan playhouse. The performance is intelligent and has made a sensible use of available cooperation. For example, Dave Sterling and Heinz Arnold have contributed their knowledge of Elizabethan music, so that the songs are right and the plays murmers with gentle recorders.

This Prospero is not too dominant, so that Ferdinand and Miranda have a chance to show what charming young people they are, the villains plot dangerously, Caliban is a shocking monster and something of a poet, and Stephano, the drunken butler, and Trinculo, the court jester, have opportunity to be actually funny. In other words, these things are as they must originally have been, and what are thought of as impossibly spectacular requirements turn out to be, as they doubtless were on Shakespeare's stage, easily within the range of simple contrivance. We have in this performance, not a spectacle or a display of magical hocus-pocus, but a very good play.

Is that not what Shakespeare meant it to be? Let us answer that question by asking another; why did Prospero break his staff and drown his book? Some of us halfway between St. Louis and Kansas City are disposed to think of this as a wasteful act.

### What Shakespeare Meant

Shakespeare retells an old story that goes back to an eighth-century issue between Krum, king of Bulgaria, and Nicephorus, emperor of Byzantium. It went through many languages, but it still remains in Shakespeare's hands the story of a trusted but treacherous deputy and his defeat by a prince of superior intelligence. When this point is lost sight of, *The Tempest* as a play is ruined. In Elizabethan eyes it was still a considerable matter to be cheated out of a dukedom and to have one's divinely annointed person threatened with death. Prospero was a deeply wronged man, whose wrongs and humiliations are always present in Shakespeare's mind. Nobody can sympathize dramatically with an omnipotent magician. Unless the men who plot against Prospero and seek the lives of Alonso and Gonzalo are criminally dangerous, they have no business in the play. Again, the ending provided for the old story exactly suited the later Shakespeare. The wronged prince was superior in ability to his enemies, and the mediaeval and Renaissance way of saying that was to say that he was a magician. The magician heals the breach by a happy marriage between his own daughter and the son of his enemy. Happy marriage was Shakespeare's cure-all, and, in the matter of revenge, he had posted a notice to the effect that any villain who trespassed on his preserves and entered one of his plays would there and then be subjected to repentance, conversion, and forgiveness.

Before we return to the pending question, why did Prospero renounce his magic, let us protest against those critics who ask why Prospero neglected his duties as the ruler of a state. Back of the question is the idea that a prince is born to be, not a servant of God and a fosterer of learning a virtue, but an administrator. There is no evidence that Prospero neglected his duties as Duke of Milan. Indeed, the facts are quite the other way. He chose to devote himself to spiritual ends and put the mechanics of government into what he thought were trustworthy hands. Let us admit that he made a mistake, although he placed his trust in his own brother. There are good counselors as well as bad, and, if Prospero had chosen a man like Gonzalo, he would not have been betrayed and banished.

### Prospero's Solution

When Prospero was reduced to the lowest terms of deprivation, what was he to do? He could, like Robinson Crusoe, have domesticated goats and planted a garden, but he did not choose to save himself and his little daughter in that way. He preferred to provide for his needs and his future by direct control of the forces of nature. The method he used was that of natural magic, a subject that demanded the highest scholarship, the noblest character, and the greatest skill. One does not need to resort to Cornelius Agrippa to know that such scholarship was comparable to that now demanded by nuclear physics. Prospero followed the Aristotelian theory of the four elements, for these were the substances from which the power of nature must be derived. His means of control were elemental spirits. Science has long known and still knows that natural forces must be seized upon and vigilantly controlled. Mainly through Ariel, whose spirit was congenial to his own, Prospero wields the illimitable powers resident in nature. This is only a dream, if you like, but science advancing by a different road has made much of it reality.

There is no agreement among Shakespeare's interpreters as to why Prospero renounces magic. Many have regarded it as the end of a mere poetic display like fairyland in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Since even natural magic was regarded with suspicion by the church because it seemed to entrench on the prerogatives of God and since in other stories it was customary for magicians to abandon their trade, Prospero's renunciation has been thought of as a pious compliance with the demands of religion, although in his magic there is not one trace of anything out of line with righteousness. A great group have looked on *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's farewell to the stage, and no doubt it is a symbol of fulfillment for Shakespeare and all the world. But there is another idea better than these. While Prospero was educating Miranda he was also educating himself. He has finally arrived at perfect wisdom, perfect virtue, and perfect competency, and he renounces magic because he no longer needs it. The idea of an immunity that comes from perfection is congenial to Renaissance thought. Prospero no longer needs to fear treason, for all men, even his enemies now bound with the chains of mercy, will love and support him. They will have to do so. Personally I fear that Sebastian and Antonio will be subject to recidivation, but that is Prospero's affair and he can attend to it.

The careful and intelligent performance of *The Tempest* at the Stephens College Playhouse enables one to perceive these deeper and less formal values in the play as a whole as well as smaller virtues in single scenes. This comes about, I think, because it is played as a play of human significance and not as a spectacle of sorcery as insulting to Shakespeare as to us.

# CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

(The following books may be more extensively reviewed in future issues as space permits.)

**Banke, Cécile de, SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE PRODUCTION: Then and Now, N. Y., McGraw Hill, 1953, pp. 342, $6.00.**

So that the "conscientious amateur" might not have his inclination to produce a Shakespearean play killed by the erudition that surrounds it, Prof. de Banke of Wellesley College has written what she calls "A manual for the scholar-player." To make the producer of the play more fully realize the nature of his work, each of the four sections of the volume is well illustrated and contains a brief historical introduction. In the first part on "Staging," Prof. de Banke reveals herself as a devotee of Elizabethan staging and uses the Adams' model as the source of her inspiration. If we remember that this is a producers' and not an actors' manual, the 2nd part on "Actors and Acting" will not be considered too brief. It is descriptive and historical rather than analytical; it tells what Shakespeare expected and what the modern producer should expect, and it briefly describes how to achieve those aims. For the reading of blank verse we are referred to other studies. The section on costume is full, well illustrated, helpfully tabulated, and should prove extremely useful. The last part of the volume devoted to "Music and Dancing" lists instruments, dances and their steps, presents a musical guide to the plays, and gives a useful list of recordings. Each of the sections is accompanied by rather full bibliographies totaling about thirty-five pages in all. The volume is a useful addition to the growing bibliography on Elizabethan and traditional staging.

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**Leeper, Janet, EDWARD GORDON CRAIG, London, Penguin Books, 1948, pp. 48 and 40 plates, 75c.**

The designs of Craig reproduced in this volume do not seem remarkable when viewed today, but when we contrast them mentally with the realistic sets they were designed to replace, their effect is astounding. Like William Poel, Craig objected to Irving and his contemporaries. However, while the elaborate stage spectacles presented by Henry Poel's energies were directed toward a renaissance of Elizabethan staging methods, Craig's efforts were spent in creating impressionistic settings to symbolize the play, or at least his impression of it. He believed that when individual stage designers, costume designers, and directors stood between the audience and the play, the play suffered. The director should control all, and all should be simplified. With one man in charge there would be "visual unity . . . harmony of movement, lighting and colour with action, music and speech, to produce a supreme *theatrical* effect." Only then could an "Art of the Theatre" be realized. A characteristic description of one of his designs (for the Church scene of *Much Ado*) reads as follows: " . . . except for the curtain there was only one strong ray of sunlight falling on the stage in a thousand colours through an invisible stained glass window." Sixteen of the forty "Designs for the Theatre" (and one other cut in the text) are illustrations for Shakespearean productions.

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**Nicoll, Allardyce, SHAKESPEARE, Oxford University Press, 1952, pp. 181, $2.50. (Pub. in U. S. Jan. 8, 1953.)**

Aware that "Speculation runs riot and specialism rules," Prof. Nicoll has written a sane book which should be an intelligent guide through Shakespeare's plays and the literature that surrounds them. Of the six easy-to-read chapters, the first concerns the background and the problems of texts, and the last four trace Shakespeare's dramatic career with perceptive comments on the plays. Biographical details are scarcely mentioned. The longest and to us the most interesting chapter was the second, concerned with "The Problem of Interpretation." Throughout the chapter Prof. Nicoll's constant plea is for an "intelligent equilibrium" between the schools of criticism. To be doctrinaire with an undoctrinaire poet must lead to difficulties. The 18th Century conception of Shakespeare as a "child of nature" in whom "common sense" ruled is supplemented by what Nicoll calls the "double vision." With this vision we see the plays as a "semblance of life more vivid than reality," and a better understanding of the plays can be achieved. It is the unity of real action with poetic words that forms the "essential basis" of all Shakespeare's strength.

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**Huhner, Max, SHAKESPEAREAN STUDIES, New York, Farrar, Straus & Young, 1952, pp. xii, 115, $3.00.**

Dr. Huhner was a physician and scientist, but his greatest love was for Shakespeare. In practically all of the eight Shakespearean essays collected in this volume Dr. Huhner takes issue with many academic scholars. When he declared that Shakespeare's wicked women, unlike the men, are without repentance, he was attacked. And there must have been controversy when he wrote that except for Cranmer in *HVIII* Shakespeare "never presents any ideal or really humble and virtuous cleric," that Polonius is a man of wisdom, that Hamlet was not mad, that the Christians in *The Merchant of Venice* are more vulnerable to censure than was Shylock, etc. Dr. Huhner, however, was a careful and intelligent reader of Shakespeare. His arguments are defended with numerous citations and they cannot be denied with impunity.

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**STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE, ed. by Arthur D. Matthews and Clark M. Emery, Coral Gables, University of Miami Press, 1953, pp. 152, $3.00. (Pub. March 7.)**

This volume contains a dozen miscellaneous papers delivered at the University of Miami Shakespeare Festival last year by scholars from Wisconsin to Florida. Many *SNL* readers who read the abstracts of most of these papers last year will undoubtedly welcome this opportunity to have these essays in complete form. History plays are considered in papers by Alan Gilbert and Josephine Pierce, music by John R. Long, Marlovian influence by Ants Oras, spirits and witchcraft by Robert H. West, *Julius Caesar* by John Earle Uhler, Hamlet and Ophelia by Richard P. Janaro and J. Max Patrick respectively, Shylock by Paul N. Siegel, heavenly justice by Carmen Rogers, the Shakespeare apocrypha by Edd Winfield Parks, and bibliographical matters by Fredson Bowers. Prof. Bowers' paper "A Definitive Text of Shakespeare: *Problems and Methods*" makes a strong plea for a new definitive old-spelling Shakespeare which would make "use of the most advanced bibliographical, critical, and linguistic techniques in order to "achieve the maximum recovery of what Shakespeare wrote in every possible detail, no matter how minute." Bowers insists that such an edition be completely new and not a revision of an old text. With W. W. Greg, Bowers agrees that every effort must be made to "establish the genetic relationship of all the early texts in order to determine which one stands closest to the author's autograph papers."

**SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY, edited for The Shakespeare Association of America by James G. McManaway, IV:1 (Jan. 1953), pp. 1-112.**

The current issue contains seven articles, eleven book reviews, some brief notes and comments, and the annual tabulation of world-wide Shakespeare productions. Josephine Waters Bennett of Hunter College notes analogues of Polonius' advice to Laertes, denies that Lord Burleigh is caricatured, and declares that Polonius is not dignified "to minimize . . . Hamlet's crime in killing him." Richard Hosely of the U. of Virginia warns against use of a "bad" quarto until other possibilities of emendation have been eliminated and illustrates the problem with reference to the 1st and 2nd quartos of *Romeo and Juliet*. The dramatic significance of Desdemona's "willow song" is elucidated by Ernest Brennecke of Columbia who shows how Shakespeare adapted the song in order to make it convey what Desdemona "would not communicate by any other means." An interesting and amusing account of Shakespearean ventures in the Rocky Mountain area is presented by Levette J. Davidson of the University of Denver (Cf. SNL., I:6:23). It is supplemented by a brief note by Msgr. Semper of Loras College who records what was probably the first performance in the area. *Othello* and *RIII* were presented in Dubuque, Iowa, in February of 1839 in a Shakespeare Hall, erected in 1837. Following a bibliographical note on two lines in *Hamlet* by Fredson Bowers of the U. of Virginia, Louis Marder of Brooklyn College describes the fine achievement and promise of the history cycle at the first Antioch College Shakespeare Festival. Another drama note is contributed by Edwin H. Miller of Simmons College who discusses the Brattle Theatre at Cambridge and notes that its financial woes were caused by over-elaborate production. Mrs. Donald F. Hyde's compilation of Shakespearean productions for the 1951-2 season lists 256 individual productions in which all but *Troilus and Cressida* and *Pericles* are represented. The scholarly book reviews in SQ are a necessary adjunct to the volumes they discuss.

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## NEW EDITIONS

**TROILUS AND CRESSIDA, ed. by Harold N. Hillebrand and Thomas W. Baldwin, Philadelphia & London, J. B. Lippincott, 1953, pp. xix, 613, $17.50. (Pub. March 18.)**

This latest volume in the New Variorum Series is based on the text of the first Folio with emendations collated from over fifty other editions of the play. Material has been surveyed through June 30, 1949 (by Baldwin who revised the manuscript after Hillebrand suffered a paralytic stroke in 1944) with *important* "discoveries" being inserted up to the time of publication. The play itself is slightly less than 3500 lines in length, but with collations and commentary its bulk extends to a meaty 317 pages. Although the notes are voluminous, the editors have naturally assumed that this is a scholars' edition and simple lines glossed in other texts are not commented on here. The 250 page Appendix discusses all aspects of the manuscript and printing of the early texts, date (1602), authorship, contemporary relationships ("American scholars . . . have rejected dark lady, Essex, Jonsonian burlesque, and soul sickness"), sources, structural analysis, staging, stage history, etc. About fifty pages of abstracts of general criticism and character analysis complete this portion of the volume. The volume concludes with a seventeen page bibliography and an Index.

# REVIEW *of* PERIODICALS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Ned B. Allen, U. of Delaware; Joel Dorius, Yale; S. F. Johnson, N.Y.U.; Arthur Sherbo, U. of Illinois.

## SHAKESPEARE'S DEBT TO HOLINSHED IN MACBETH

ROBERT ADGER LAW of the University of Texas takes issue with Miss Muriel C. Bradbrook's statement that in *Macbeth* Shakespeare's debt to Holinshed "is of the slightest; so bald a narrative gave Shakespeare the merest skeleton of a plot." Prof. Law's tabular presentation of forty-five similarities indicates that Holinshed furnished Shakespeare with much more than a skeleton and actually "offered numerous hints for specific lines in the drama." Shakespeare made a close study of the eight pages in Holinshed's account and passed over, in deference to King James, the one page which recorded the "many evil deeds of Fleance and his Stewart line." Shakespeare, however, did find the murder of Duncan "bald" and therefore turned to the murder of King Duffe some twenty pages before for nine specific details, and also added three details from other portions of the chronicle. A listing of three dozen details "invented by Shakespeare or gathered from other sources," "indicates that the opening lines of practically every scene present a Shakespeare invention. Probably, this results from his careful linking together of the various incidents of his plot. The whole analysis, which does not attempt to include characterization, shows that the composition of *Macbeth* is close akin to that of other 'histories' based on Holinshed." ["The Composition of *Macbeth* with Reference to Holinshed," The University of Texas *Studies in English*, XXXI (1952), 35-41.]

## THE INFLUENCE OF MORGANN'S *FALSTAFF*

STUART MALCOLM TAVE demonstrates that a previous note on the influence of Morgann's essay (*RES*, VI [1930], 320-2) on Hazlitt and hence on much later criticism is "hardly justified" by the facts. He then indicates that although Morgann's essay excited some enthusiasm in a few critics from its publication in 1777 to the first decade of the nineteenth century, it exerted relatively little influence. Hazlitt probably knew of it only through reading a review of it, and there is no evidence that Coleridge had read it. Tave concludes that Morgann was not the "prophet and founder of a new school of criticism." ["Notes on the Influence of Morgann's Essay on Falstaff," *Review of English Studies*, New Series, III (Oct. 1952), 371-5.]

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*HAMLET* AT ITHACA COLLEGE: Six performances of *Hamlet* directed by Eugene R. Wood drew enthusiastic responses from sell-out audiences which included students from 15 High Schools as much as 100 miles away.

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## THE PLAY'S THE THING?

RICHARD FLATTER, who has translated many of Shakespeare's plays into German, discusses the staging of the climax of the play-scene in *Hamlet*: "Give me some light. Away!" For "psychological, theatrical and textual reasons," it is necessary to assume at this point some highly significant "silent action." Flatter disagrees with Dover Wilson's view that the play within the play is seen by Claudius as a revelation of Hamlet's knowledge of the murder and at the same time by the rest of the spectators as a thinly veiled threat by Hamlet on Claudius' life. Various remarks by Rosencrantz, Gertrude, and Claudius himself indicate that Hamlet must have threatened the King overtly before the departure of the court. Furthermore, from our knowledge of the character of Claudius, he must have given a clear indication of his reaction to the play. Flatter concludes that when the court sees Lucianus pour the poison into the ear of the Player-King, Claudius "jumps to his feet," approaches Hamlet, and Hamlet, "thinking he is threatened, draws his sword." Thereupon Claudius rushes off and the court follows. This "business" has been "put to the test," having been devised by Flatter for a production in Vienna in 1936. ["The Climax of the Play-Scene in 'Hamlet'," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, 87/88 (1952), 26-42.]

## AS IF A MAN WERE AUTHOR OF HIMSELF

IRVING RIBNER of Queens College uses La Primaudaye's analysis of pride in *The French Academy* to show that *Coriolanus* is "one of the clearest and simplest" of Shakespeare's tragedies. Although it is a political play, "the problems of state are subordinate to those of character." The hero is, "in the true sense of the word, anti-social"; he is guilty of the cardinal sin of pride, which "grows out of self-ignorance and engenders self-deception." He is unfit to "govern a commonwealth" because he almost completely lacks a sense of "man's relation to humanity." For the same reason his conception of duty and honor is false. His yielding to his mother demonstrates that he is a basically good man, but, unlike Lear and Othello, he experiences no "regeneration and penance before death." He returns to the Volscians "still unaware of the nature of his sin," and only at the moment of his death does he realize that "his life has brought him to a tragic impasse." Shakespeare does not hide from us his hero's nobility, "or deny us the hope that he will eventually overcome the evil force to which he is slave, and after death perhaps achieve salvation." ["The Tragedy of *Coriolanus*," *English Studies*, XXXIV (Feb. 1953), 1-9.]

## 18TH CENTURY CRITICISM

W. O. S. SUTHERLAND, Jr., of Northwestern University calls attention again to *Prompters* 57, 195, and 100, critical essays on (respectively) Polonius, Lear, and Hamlet. Appearing in 1735, they are early examples of the criticism of individual characters, "one of the distinguishing traits of Shakespeare criticism in the latter half of the eighteenth century." Each essay is divided into two parts: one is devoted to a characterization of the "dramatic personage," the other describes one or two actors in the role and comments adversely on their interpretation of the part. Polonius, for example, is held up as a serious character in opposition to the general conception of him as a buffoon. Griffin of Drury Lane and Hippisley of Covent, both popular comedians, are subjected to criticism for their Poloniuses. Hamlet is said to be marked by the "characteristic Distinction of a *pensive, yet genteel*, Humanity." Robert Wilkes is the actor singled out for criticism here. In the essay on Lear, however, no new interpretation is offered, the paper serving to preserve "the theatrical concept of the character held in the years before Garrick, years for which little is known about the acting of the part." An unnamed actor is criticized for his lack of fire. "In thus recording an early stage in the history of these three characters, Hill and Popple have furnished a valuable early record of one facet of the history of Shakespeare criticism." ["Polonius, Hamlet, and Lear in Aaron Hill's *Prompter*," *Studies in Philology*, XLIX (October, 1952), 605-618.]

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### Examination Boner

"Macduff was born by means of a Shakespearean operation."

—*Submitted by George E. Brooks, Springfield College*

## CLEOPATRA'S ASPS

IRVING RIBNER of Queens College shows how Shakespeare transformed a few lines of dialogue in Peele's *Famous Chronicle of King Edward the First*, themselves deriving from a broadside ballad, into Cleopatra's "Peace, Peace!/Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,/That sucks the nurse asleep" (V. 2. 311-13). Cleopatra's use of the asps was suggested by Plutarch's life of Antony, but the source for the application of one asp to her arm and another to her breast has hitherto gone unnoted. In Peele's play Queen Elinor causes the wife of the Mayor of London to be bound to a chair and has an asp applied to her breast. "Why, so;" says the Queen, "now she is a nurse.—Suck on, sweet babe." ["Shakespeare and Peele: The Death of Cleopatra," *Notes and Queries*, 197 (June 7, 1952), 244-46.]

## CLEOPATRA'S ASP

JOHN D. REEVES and HOLGER NORGAARD write successive notes to discredit the claims of Irving Ribner (*Notes and Queries*, 197, pp. 244-6) that Shakespeare's dramatization of the death of Cleopatra and her use of an asp owes something to the murder of the Mayoress of London in George Peele's *Famous Chronicle of Edward the First*. Reeves and Norgaard insist: 1) that Ribner is mistaken in supposing that he was the first to discover the resemblance between the two plays, and 2) that the resemblance does not, as Ribner says, indicate that Peele was Shakespeare's source. ["A Supposed Indebtedness of Shakespeare to Peele," *Notes and Queries*, 197:21 (Oct. 11, 1952), 441-3.]

## *HAMLET* QUARTO

K. B. DANKS surveys the ownership records of the *Hamlet* quartos as recorded in the Stationer's Register and comes to the conclusion that Q1 is not necessarily a "stolen and surreptitious" copy. ("'*Hamlet*': The Problem of Copyright," *Notes and Queries*, 197:3, pp. 47-8, Feb. 2, 1952.)

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# REVIEW of PERIODICALS

## MANY MELANCHOLIES

After recounting the medieval and Elizabethan theory of humours, CARMEN ROGERS of Florida State University discusses the interest of Elizabethans in melancholy. She observes that some poets and characters in drama derive pleasure from melancholy, and she reviews the melancholy found in Elizabethan (and later) English literature. "Of the great Renaissance studies in true melancholy, Shakespeare gave us two: Jacques and Hamlet, one serving to support the thoughtful laughter of true comedy, the other becoming a magnificent tragic hero." Professor Rogers later compares the melancholy of Macbeth with that of Hamlet. "The fate of Macbeth . . . was tied not only to vaulting ambition but to a sensitive mind distraught . . . by the play of supernatural powers, which in the mind of the Elizabethan were often allied to the evil of melancholy. Hamlet, thinker and idealist . . . loses balance once his searching mind is 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought'." She also observes that many of Shakespeare's other characters are melancholy: e.g., Antonio (of *The Merchant of Venice*), Iago, Edmund, Lear, and Timon. Quotations in which they say that they are melancholy are cited. She decides finally: "As many men, as many melancholies." "English Renaissance Melancholy," *Florida State University Studies*, No. 5 (1952), 45-66.

## PRIVATE FRIENDS

THOMAS H. McNEAL of the University of Alabama agrees with Massey and Lee that the slight resemblance between the description of Saviolina's playing of the viola in *Every Man Out of his Humour* (III. 9), and Shakespeare's sonnet 128 indicates borrowing. But, unlike Massey and Lee, he thinks Jonson borrowed from Shakespeare rather than vice-versa. Moreover, he points out a second stronger resemblance between *Every Man Out* (I.1, and the first eight lines of sonnet 29. Mr. McNeal observes that Jonson and Shakespeare seem to have been on good terms in 1598, and that Jonson may have been one of the "private friends" who (Meres tells us) read the sonnets at that time. This would explain Jonson's remembering them when he wrote *Every Man Out* in 1599. ["'Every Man Out of his Humour' and Shakespeare's 'Sonnets'," *Notes and Queries*, 197:18 (Aug. 30, 1952), 376.]

## PERICLES THE PATIENT

J. M. S. TOMPKINS believes that Shakespeare wrote *Pericles* because he wanted to give us a patient hero. All Shakespeare's earlier great characters (with the possible exception of Brutus) "are dominated by impulse, passion, resentment, leading to physical and spiritual violence." They cry out for patience, like Lear, or recognize it enviously in others, like Hamlet, but they do not achieve it. "Of all Shakespeare's heroes Pericles is the most patient man." Shakespeare did dramatize patience in some degree in his later romances, but in them the sufferer learns patience in penitence, as do Posthumus and Leontes, or sublimate it out of injury, as do Hermione and Prospero. Mr. Tompkins stresses the fact that this virtue of patience was given to Pericles by Shakespeare; it was not in his source. And he suggests that Shakespeare may have changed the name in the source—Appolonius—to Pericles because he had been reading about Pericles of Athens in Plutarch. Plutarch's Pericles was also patient. "Why Pericles?" *The Review of English Studies*, III: 12 (Oct. 1952), 315-24.

## SHAKESPEARE, THORPE, AND HUGHES

H. A. SHIELD defends the theory that William Hughes was the man to whom and about whom Shakespeare wrote his sonnets. His chief arguments are: 1. In the sonnets Shakespeare puns on "Will," "Hue," and "Hews." 2. William Hughes was a Welshman, and Shakespeare knew and was fond of Welshmen. 3. Thomas Thorpe, who printed the sonnets, lived in Chester as well as in London, and William Hughes was also of Chester. ["Links with Shakespeare X," *Notes and Queries*, 197:18 (Aug. 30, 1952), 387-9.]

## TO PLEASE ELIZABETH

C. A. GREER supports the usual assumption that the deposition scene was in *Richard II* as Shakespeare first wrote the play. It was cut out of the acting versions on which the first and second quartos are based, he argues, not merely to shorten the play, but to avoid objections from Queen Elizabeth. ["The Deposition Scene of 'Richard II'," *Notes and Queries*, 197:23 (Nov. 8, 1952), 492-3.]

## THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL

*Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus* remind us, writes L. C. KNIGHTS, that human actuality is more important than political abstractions and that politics becomes corrupted as we forget that our opponents or enemies are real persons. *Caesar* points up the unreality of the world of the conspirators, the disparity between their desires for personal friendship and the values which obtain in public life, and the ways in which their personal feelings distort their public actions. The far great *Coriolanus* shows us a hero who can never grow out of his rigid and oversimplified warrior ethic confronted in Act III by a mother who advocates the abrogation of the qualities of trust upon which society is founded. Volumnia clearly reveals the class basis of the patrician honor which denies to her son any understanding of the people. In an age when politics moves in the abstract, Shakespeare can caution us that public crises are rooted in individuals and that we must not lose the "discipline of the actual." ["Shakespeare and Political Wisdom," *Sewanee Review*, LXI:1 (Winter 1953), 43-55.]

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## AN ECHO?

An expression in *Hamlet* which seems to be reminiscent of the *Ur-Hamlet* is pointed out by J. C. MAXWELL. The words

. . . "oh, 'tis most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet."

are a part of Hamlet's speech to his mother (III. 4. 202-17) in which he indicates that he suspects Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of treachery and is pleased with the prospect of circumventing them. Mr. Maxwell's argument is based on the fact that in *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* the two characters who correspond to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern fire at Hamlet simultaneously from opposite sides and thus kill each other when Hamlet escapes the bullets by falling forward. ["'Hamlet': An Echo of the 'Ur-Hamlet'?" *Notes and Queries*, 197:20 (Sept. 27, 1952), 420.]

## BEFORE PENICILLIN

HAZEL ALLISON STEVENSON of Florida State University explains the Medieval and Renaissance doctrine of signatures, that is, the belief that the shapes and colors of leaves, roots, and flowers indicated what diseases they would cure. Plants with heartshaped leaves were taken for heart disease, ferns to prevent baldness, bright flowers as eye remedies, and any plant resembling a serpent for snake bite. Professor Stevenson gives numerous illustrations of the influence of the doctrine on Elizabethan poets and dramatists, including Shakespeare. Plantain, for instance, is mentioned by Shakespeare as a cure for wounds, apparently because of the veins in its leaves (*Love's Labour's Lost*, III. 1. 71-5 and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 2. 52-4). He has Lysander sneer at Hermia's low stature by suggesting that she has eaten knot-grass (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. 2. 329). Knot-grass being a low plant, was sometimes thought to stunt the growth of one who ate it. Shakespeare makes at least one reference to the mandrake as an emblem of incontinence (*II Henry IV*, III. 2. 338-9), the idea being that the root of the plant resembled the lower limbs of the human body. However, when he refers to the same plant as a soporific, he, more carefully than his contemporaries, distinguishes between superstition and medicine by calling it mandragora (*Othello*, III. 3. 330-3 and *Antony and Cleopatra*, I. 5. 4). ["The Major Elizabethan Poets and the Doctrine of Signatures," *Florida State University Studies*, No. 5 (1952), 11-31.]

## THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE-FLEMING

One of the popular butts of Elizabethan comedy was the rather simple-hearted Flemish craftsman who was sometimes cruelly used, but who did not attract the hatred of the English as much as did the stage-Italian or stage-Spaniard. A. BRONSON FELDMAN of the University of Pennsylvania gathers together a number of references to the Flemings in the English drama in an able demonstration of this conclusion. Indeed, "there are a few instances in Elizabethan drama where men of the Netherlands appear as . . . courtiers, soldiers, scholars, gentlemen of arts and arms." Shakespeare puns on "Netherlands" and the nether regions of the human anatomy in the *Comedy of Errors* and in 2 *Henry IV* and makes casual, and jocular, references to the Flemish capacity for drink and fondness for butter in *Merry Wives*. ["The Flemings in Shakespeare's Theatre," *Notes and Queries*, 197 (June 21, 1952), 265-68.]

## *OTHELLO*: FOLIO vs. FIRST QUARTO

KENNETH MUIR of the University of Leeds examines some readings from the First Quarto of *Othello* which "deserve more consideration than they have had." One example will show the cogency of his arguments. "At II. i. 11 ff., & reads: 'For doe but stand vpon the banning shore,/The chiding billow seemes to pelt the clouds. . . . ' The F version of these lines [more widely adopted by Editors] has two variants: 'For do but stand vpon the Foaming Shore,/The chidden Billow seemes to pelt the Clouds. . . . ' At first sight *foaming* seems to be more natural, though Ridley suggested that *banning* concealed the true meaning now lost. Steevens, however, argued that Q offered the bolder image, i.e., 'the shore that execrates the ravage of the waves.' But surely Shakespeare was thinking of the shore as forbidding the waves to advance farther, and the idea may be compared with *Richard II*, II. 1. 62, and *King John*, II. 1. 23, where the shore beats back the ocean. The other meaning of *banning* may have suggested *chidden* or *chiding* in the next line." ["Folio Sophistications in 'Othello'," *Notes and Queries*, 197 (August 2, 1952), 335-36.]

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